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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #0438 0422053  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 112053Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6984  
INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 8640  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1639  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ FEB 9910  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 6981  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 2997  
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 5308  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 7689  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 4822

UNCLAS BOGOTA 000438

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [SMIG](#) [SOCI](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: FARC MASSACRES 17 INDIGENOUS IN NARINO - HIGH RISK  
OF MASS DISPLACEMENT

REF: 08 BOGOTA 004231

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SUMMARY  
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11. (SBU) The FARC killed at least 17 members of the Awa indigenous tribe, including three minors, on February 4 in the southwestern department of Narino. Details remain unconfirmed, but the local UNHCR Representative told us an eye-witness reported that the FARC tortured and stabbed the victims for allegedly collaborating with the Colombian military. The local government is working with security forces to send mission to the area, but access to the remote community is difficult and security remains a concern. At least 20 families have fled the area and the risk of additional displacement remains high. Human Rights Watch and UNHCR called on the Government of Colombia to take immediate action to help the victims and the displaced, as well as to investigate the incident. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) The FARC killed at least 17 members of the Awa indigenous tribe, including three minors, on February 4 in a remote area along the Telembi River in Barbacoas municipality in the southwestern department of Narino. According to media reports, nine of the victims were from the same family. Details remain unconfirmed, but Jean-Noel Wetterwald, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative, told us an eye-witness reported that the FARC tortured and stabbed the victims after the Colombian military (Colmil) entered the area and asked the Awa about the location of the FARC. Many questions remain, including the location of the bodies and exactly how many were killed.

13. (SBU) Narino Governor Navarro Wolff told us that the FARC killed 10 Colombian soldiers in the same area in October 2008, and that the current military follow-up led the FARC to retaliate against the Awa for allegedly cooperating with the Colmil. He said local authorities were working with the Colombian National Police and military to put a mission together, but that everything depended on security. The zone is very remote. Deploying personnel and gathering information is difficult due to a large number of anti-personal mines and the presence of multiple illegal armed groups in the area (reftel). The departmental Ombudsman's Office canceled a humanitarian mission to the area on February 3 also for security reasons.

14. (U) According to UNHCR, at least 20 families have fled the Awa community heading toward the municipal head in Barbacoas -- about a two-day walk. Wetterwald, who returned from Narino on February 3, said there was a high risk of



additional displacement. Clashes between the FARC and ELN in the same area displaced nearly 300 persons in June 2008.

15. (SBU) Human Rights Watch and UNHCR called on the Government of Colombia to take immediate action to help the victims and the displaced, and to investigate the incident. Wetterwald said the FARC killing of the 17 Awa was a gross violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). He added that if the Colombian army used the civil population to gather intelligence on the FARC, that could be a violation as well.violation as well.

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